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CIA charter faces Senate revision

The varied assaults on the Huddleston bill to provide a charter for the Central Intelligence Agency have convinced the Senate Intelligence Committee it has taken a new tack.

Negotiations between Capitol Hill and the White House were under way this week to frame new and abbreviated legislation quickly, with congressional oversight of intelligence activities the main sticking point.

Committee sources indicated that, if agreement is reached, the new legislation will be taken to the Senate floor without hearings, this being the only likely way to enact legislation at this session of Congress.

The original 172-page proposal, introduced early in February by Senator Walter D. Huddleston (D-Ky.) after several years of controversy with the White House, was assailed from all sides.

For instance, Jerry W. Friedheim, general manager of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, wrote to Chairman Birch Bayh protesting a provision in the bill granting the CIA broad exemptions from the Freedom of Information Act and another provision establishing punishments for disclosing names of agents either intentionally or through negligence.

"The FOI act exemption is of particu-

lar concern to ANPA," Friedheim said. "Existing law contains adequate safeguards for national security information. CIA officials have not asserted that the act has led to disclosures of information actually deleterious to the security of the United States."

On the other hand, advocates of a freer hand for the CIA have maintained that bill restricted the agency too much.

Contents of the new legislation have not been disclosed. They are expected, however, to provide some sort of cutback in what the CIA has to reveal through the FOI Act, some sort of penalties for disclosing the names of CIA operatives, and less reporting to Congress on CIA activities.